

Claims

What is claimed is:

1. A content on demand system comprising:
logic to compose set top box configuration information into an audio and/or video stream format; and
logic to communicate the configuration information to a plurality of set top boxes.

2. The content on demand system of claim 1, wherein the set top box configuration information further comprises:
general configuration information, and configuration information for one or more groups of set top boxes .

3. The content on demand system of claim 1, wherein the logic to compose set top box configuration information into an audio and/or video stream format further comprises:
logic to compose set top box configuration information expressed in extensible markup language into the audio and/or video stream format.

4. The content on demand system of claim 3, wherein the set top box configuration information further comprises:
general configuration information, and configuration information for one or more groups of set top boxes.

5. The content on demand system of claim 1, further comprising:
logic to receive from a set top box a request for an audio and/or video stream, the request comprising a service group identifier for the set top box and an identifier of a title of the audio and/or video stream, and to communicate the audio and/or video stream to a service node corresponding to the service group identifier.

6. A content on demand system comprising:

a content on demand server system comprising logic to compose set top box configuration information into an audio and/or video stream format, and logic to communicate the configuration information to a plurality of service nodes; and a plurality of service nodes each comprising logic to compose a service group identifier into the audio and/or video stream format, and logic to communicate the configuration information and the service group identifier to a plurality of set top boxes.

7. The content on demand system of claim 6, wherein the set top box configuration information further comprises:

general configuration information, and configuration information for one or more groups of set top boxes .

8. The content on demand system of claim 6, wherein the logic to compose set top box configuration information into an audio and/or video stream format further comprises:

logic to compose set top box configuration information expressed in extensible markup language into the audio and/or video stream format.

9. The content on demand system of claim 8, wherein the set top box configuration information further comprises:

general configuration information, and configuration information for one or more groups of set top boxes .

10. The content on demand system of claim 6, further comprising:

logic to receive from a set top box a request for an audio and/or video stream, the request comprising the service group identifier communicated to the set top box and

an identifier of a title of the audio and/or video stream, and to provide the audio and/or video stream to a service node corresponding to the service group identifier.

11. A set top box comprising:

logic to tune to a channel comprising configuration information having a streamed audio and/or video format, to read the configuration information, and to store the configuration information in memory.

12. The set top box of claim 11, wherein the logic to tune to a channel comprising configuration information having a streamed audio and/or video format, to read the configuration information, and to store the configuration information in memory further comprises:

logic to check a version of the configuration information having a streamed audio and/or video format, and when the version does not match a version of configuration information stored in memory, to store the configuration information having a streamed audio and/or video format to memory.

13. The set top box of claim 11, further comprising:

logic to locate a service group identifier having a format of audio and/or video streams, and to apply the service group identifier to locate configuration information specific to set top boxes serviced by a service node identified by the service group identifier.

14. A set top box comprising:

logic to tune to a predetermined virtual channel number to retrieve set top box configuration information formatted as an audio and/or video stream; and logic to apply the configuration information to affect operational settings of a set top box.

"15." The set top box of claim 14, wherein the set top box configuration information further comprises:

general configuration information, and configuration information for one or more groups of set top boxes .

16. The set top box of claim 14, wherein the logic to apply the configuration information to affect operational settings of a set top box further comprises: logic to apply the configuration information when a version of the configuration information differs from a version of configuration information previously applied to affect operational settings of the set top box.

17. The set top box of claim 14, wherein the logic to apply the configuration information to affect operational settings of a set top box further comprises: logic to apply general configuration information to affect general operational settings of the set top box; logic to locate a service group identifier for the set top box; and logic to apply the service group identifier to locate service group specific configuration information for the set top box, the service group specific configuration information formatted as an audio and/or video stream.

18. A set top box comprising:

logic to tune to a channel comprising set top box configuration information having a streamed audio and/or video format, and to locate among the configuration information a service group identifier for a set top box and a channel and an alternate channel from which to retrieve a content index having the streamed audio and/or video format, and to tune to the channel from which to retrieve the content index to retrieve the content index, and to tune to the alternate channel when the channel from which to retrieve the content index comprises an indication of invalid data.

19. The set top box of claim 18, wherein the set top box configuration information further comprises:

general configuration information, and configuration information for one or more groups of set top boxes.